

The University of Southern Mississippi

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Faculty Senate Minutes

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Faculty Senate Minutes - October 5, 2018

USM Faculty Senate

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**The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate Meeting**

Friday, October 5, 2018, 2:00 p.m.
Union B (Hattiesburg), North Academic Building 125 (Gulf Park: IVN)

Present: Mac Alford, Cindy Handley, Cheryl Jenkins (proxy), Josh Hill (proxy), Leffi Cewe-Malloy, Nicolle Jordan, Brian LaPierre, Sharon Rouse, Susan Howell (proxy), Jeremy Scott, Jonathan Yarrington, Jennifer Courts, Charles McCormick (Proxy), Ann Marie Kinnell (proxy), Bob Press, Eric Saillant, David Holt, Tom Rishel, Lee Follett, Don Redalje, Amber Cole, Mike Morgan (proxy), John Lambert, Melinda McLelland, Melinda Bowens, Anne Sylvest, Catharine Bomhold, Bradley Green, Susan Hrostowski, Tim Rehner, Winston Choi, Kim Ward, Jennifer Brannock, Bonnie Harbaugh, Ashley Krebs (proxy), Lilian Hill (proxy)

Absent: David Lee, Kevin Greene, Scott Milroy, Miles Doleac

1.0 Organizational Items

- 1.1 Call to Order
- 1.2 Roll Call
- 1.3 Recognition of Quorum (23)
- 1.4 Recognition of $\frac{2}{3}$ membership for voting on Bylaws and Resolutions (26)

2.0 Adoption of Agenda: Sharon R. moved to approve, Kim W. seconded, **Approved** unanimously by voice vote

3.0 Program

- 3.1 Dr. Michelle Arrington, Associate Provost for Institutional Research presented information about Institutional Research data. Important institutional data is available to Southern Miss faculty.
 - To access the website, go to <https://www.usm.edu/institutional-research>
 - Faculty have access to several useful reports via the website. Enter your SOAR credentials to gain access
 - Useful tabs include the Dashboard, Dynamic Factbook (provides several filter options to create specific reports)
 - Report content possibilities include: campus enrollment, program enrollment, etc.
 - The website is constantly being updated with new information.
 - Michelle was recognized by the senate for her years of service to the university and in recognition of her upcoming retirement

4.0 Approval of Minutes

- 4.1 September 2018: Sharon R. moved to approve the September minutes, Tim R. seconded, **Approved** unanimously by voice vote

5.0 Officer Reports

5.1 President (Mac Alford):

Option 1 of the Academic Calendar was approved. This was the schedule similar to the current one, but final exams will occur the week directly after Thanksgiving next year. Option 1 was tweaked slightly so that the Monday following Thanksgiving would be a “dead day,” and commencement would be moved to Saturday.

The Academic Integrity Policy has been revised.

The revision includes information about trained facilitators in each College (could help professors meeting with students for the first time), “recommended sanctions” (professors still have authority, but consistency is key); and how to deal with students who are not in your class (advertising the writing of papers).

Flowers were sent on behalf of the Faculty Senate to Chris Winstead, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences after the death of his mother.

Sexual Harassment and Misconduct—The President wanted to remind us to be vigilant and responsible in these areas. Too much of his time, he thinks, is dealing with fallout of these unnecessary problems.

Planning or renovation activities should involve Chris Crenshaw (Physical Plant).

Changes to Committee on Committees--six people total; need nominations for the four faculty representatives.

We need names by November 9 for faculty members that will be recognized at football game. I suggest lifetime award winners from last May, or perhaps Teaching and Service Award winners. Will pass responsibility to the Awards Committee.

5.2 President-Elect (Susan Hrostowski): No report

5.3 Secretary (Melinda McLelland): No report

5.4 Secretary-Elect (Amber Cole): No report

6.0 Decision / Action Items

6.1 None

7.0 Standing Committee Reports

7.1 Academics (Kevin Green): No report

7.2 Administrative Evaluations (Melinda McLelland): No report

7.3 Awards (Bradley Green): No report

7.4: Bylaws (no chair yet): No report

7.5 Elections (Tom Rishel):

- I have emailed Michelle Arrington in Institutional Research to request the faculty numbers per unit under the re-organization so that we can begin planning for elections as well as preparing for discussions in faculty senate regarding the future make-up and representation within senate.
- At this time we expect to conduct elections in Spring 2019 following determination of the makeup of the senate in Fall 2018.

7.6 Finance (Amber Cole):

- Amber Cole was elected chair of the committee. We have been in touch with the VPFA, Allyson Easterwood and have scheduled meetings for the remainder of the academic year as follows:

Friday, October 19th
Friday, November 30th
Friday, February 22nd
Friday, March 29th
Friday, April 26th

- All meetings will begin at 10 a.m. If anyone has any questions or concerns that you would like for the committee to take to Allyson, please let one of the committee members know on the Monday prior to the applicable meeting. We plan to send a list of topics/questions to Allyson no later than the Wednesday prior so she'll have an opportunity to address them adequately.

7.7. Governance (Don Redalje):

- The Faculty Senate Governance Committee has met electronically since the September Senate meeting. Since the September meeting, the committee was given several charges by the Faculty Senate President that we have begun to address.
- Charges:
 1. Right-Sizing of the Faculty Senate.
 - Currently the Senate membership follows the Senate By Laws that says that the Senate should consist of about 45 Senators. The Senators have been drawn from the former Colleges and Departments to help ensure that most, if not all units are represented.
 - A subcommittee of the Reorganization Implementation Committee has suggested that the Senate should be smaller, reflecting Schools rather than Departments with the Senate membership being about 35.
 - In the past, I remember that the Senate followed a guideline of 1 Senator for each 15 Faculty members.

- The Governance Committee was given the task of polling the Faculty to get a sense of how large of a Faculty Senate that the Faculty would consider to be appropriate. One option was to hold open forums to gauge the feeling of the Faculty on this issue. There would be a forum on the coast as well as one(s) in Hattiesburg. The Committee also considered putting together an online poll asking the Faculty to pick which option they liked best with maybe a comment box for input of other ideas and comments. The online poll was considered to be the best option and we are working on setting up the poll and will seek approval from the full Senate before proceeding.
- 2. How Faculty Contracts were distributed at least for the College of Arts and Sciences.
 - There was great concern voiced by a number of Faculty about the manner in which we were given contracts to read and then sign in a very crowded and public setting with no time for review or checking for accuracy and correctness. This was considered to be an inappropriate way to provide Faculty with their contracts. The Committee will address this with the CAS Dean at a future meeting between CAS Senators and the CAS Dean.
- 3. Shared Governance and Academic Freedom and Faculty Involvement in Leadership Choices.
 - Last academic year, the Senate Governance committee reviewed statements on Shared Governance and Academic Freedom that were available from various sources and the appropriate sections of the current Faculty Handbook. We are continuing to address our draft recommendation to the Senate with an eye toward submitting a Resolution to the Senate at an upcoming meeting.
 - The Committee will also continue to work on a Resolution that stresses the critical role of the Faculty in the choices that are being made on those who will be leaders at USM, particularly at the School Director and Program Leader (or whatever we end up calling these folks) levels.
- 4. The Scope of Authority at the School Director Level, Due Process and Procedures for When Directors Have Exceeded Their Authority.
 - It is very unclear what level of authority will (or has been) be given to School Directors. It is clear that most Directors were chosen because they were strong leaders who have demonstrated their abilities for fairness and appropriate behavior when working the Faculty in their Schools. This may not always be the case. In addition, Faculty were not consulted in all cases when decisions were made to appoint School Directors. This is most inconsistent with the foundational principle of Shared Governance. What are the roles and responsibilities of Directors within the reorganization scheme? What recourse is available to Faculty when a Director exceeds his/her authority and behaves in an inappropriate manner? The Committee will address these issues and suggest policies and procedures for such cases. It is

recognized that the Council of Directors and the administration will have the primary roles in developing these policies and procedures, but the Faculty must also have the opportunity to voice our concerns and make suggestions for policies and procedures on issues of importance to Faculty.

7.8 Gulf Coast (Lee Follett):

- Reorganization proposal developed by a Committee at Gulf Park relating to the relationships between Gulf Park and Hattiesburg. Will send proposal to provost by November 1st.

7.9 Handbook (Jeremy Scott):

- The Faculty Senate Handbook Committee met on September 26 and elected myself as chairman of the committee. Immediately after the election, the University Handbook Committee met, which is comprised of some members of the FSHC. David Holt was elected chairman of that committee. They discussed committee bylaws and a process for approving/denying/changing language in the faculty handbook which is being written by the Reorganization Implementation Committee.

7.10 University Relations and Communication (Nicolle Jordan): No report

7.11 Welfare and Environment (Bob Press):

- Mental Health:
 - o (1) Brad Green, Professor of Psychology and Cindy Handley Dept. of Medical Laboratory Science have identified several areas of focus:
 - o That there are ways to make our jobs less stressful; that applying sound mental health practices to our work can help faculty be less stressful, happier, and more productive (but not in a workaholic way).
 - o There are preferred management styles that support better mental health and reduce job turnover and resignations.
 - o Faculty support groups; guided meditation, for example.
 - o Teaching faculty how to manage stress
 - o Preventative and intervention methods
- Specifically at this point, Brad Green provides the following information regarding meditation as a way of helping faculty deal with mental health/stress challenges. The following is not offered for Senate action but is informational.
 - o I am attaching the synopsis regarding effects of the practice of mindfulness meditation using the Headspace App. If USM becomes a Headspace partner, faculty and staff would get a reduction in the annual fee for the app, from \$96 down to \$36. That would involve no cost to USM, according to the Headspace representatives I have spoken with. To use the app a person need only download it to their phone and/or computer. The regular sessions are usually 10, 15, or 20 minutes (choice of the user). There are packages for developing mindfulness meditation as a general skill (foundation pack and advanced series) , and quite a few packages for specific applications (sleep, stress, happiness, work and performance, exercise, mindful eating, and so on). All of the packages are available with the membership fee, though some do not

unlock until the fundamentals have been completed. There is also a 10 session FREE introduction that anyone can try. <https://www.headspace.com/>



Headspace x USM
partnership

- Improving parental leave benefits at USM.
 - Eric Saillant's progress report on establishing a policy of
 - He is exploring the need for a paid, stand alone maternity leave policy at USM that does not draw from sick leave or personal leave.
 - Issue – background
 - Managing a professional career, and family life can be challenging and this is especially true during the first few weeks/months with a new child. Assistance/benefit to employees with new children can be provided in many ways but a primary need of parents is time. Therefore, the policy on leave during the late stages of pregnancy and/or immediately following birth/adoption of a child is critical to the wellness of employees who decide to have children while working at USM and can contribute to make the University attractive to potential candidates applying to open positions. In all other industrialized countries and at least in some developing countries, paid parental leave is granted by law (e.g. up to 480 days parental leave in Sweden, 1 year in Denmark, 16-18 weeks in France, 12 weeks in Pakistan). In contrast, the United States federal laws only provide some protection of employment for qualifying employees and do not impose paid parental leave.
 - The current USM policy is to allow employees to take up to 12 weeks of leave in case of child birth, adoption or placement of a child in foster care of the employee. This policy is in line with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which essentially protects eligible employees from losing employment when taking leave to take care of a new child. However, employees are supposed to take from their sick leave and personal leave to cover the absence or they have the option to take unpaid leave (e.g. if they run out of sick-leave and personal leave) so there is no real paid parental leave benefit. In the United States, some states provide a state benefit which goes beyond the FMLA (e.g. partial pay in California and New Jersey) and it seems that in most cases, even if the state law does not impose paid parental leave, the employer is allowed to provide paid parental leave. Some U.S. Universities do provide paid parental leave even though don't have to according to State and Federal laws (e.g. Rice University, Duke University, New York University). The issue is that paid parental leave should be treated as a stand-alone benefit and not a sickness or disability where sick-leave is used to cover the absence. Another issue brought-up during early discussions with committee members (R. Press) is that parents of a young child may have difficulties finding appropriate care compatible with their academic schedule and the need for and feasibility of an on-campus facility would be worth exploring.
 - Planned activities for the fall 2018 semester:

- Compile information on current policies at USM
- Gather information from other states and countries regarding laws and policies on parental leave to justify the need for upgrading the policy at USM
- Request from Human Resource an estimate of the cost of a real paid parental leave where employees would not need to take from their personal leave or sick leave
- Examine the Mississippi law and policies regarding paid and unpaid leave to determine if there is any legal obstacle for instating paid parental leave at USM. This may include contacting IHL to obtain their input.
- Pursue other ways to assist employees with new children: Request from Human Resources the cost for operating a childcare facility for parents of young children at USM.
- Other suggestions from the committee
- Brian LaPierre is exploring USM's current gun policies and comparing it to those of Ole Miss and other in-state, peer institutions. In comparison with USM, he has found that many of these universities have labeled more of their campus spaces as gun free and have found ways to make their entire campuses gun free for certain events.
- Winston Choi is taking up an initiative followed in the past of establishing contact with the Student Government Association (SGA) to explore areas of mutual interest for possible collaboration on resolutions and recommendations to the Administration. He has already begun a dialogue.
- Bob Press (elected chair by secret ballots delivered to another committee member) continues to follow up with the Senate on:
 - Diversity hiring. The Committee appreciates the briefing by the Provost at our last Senate meeting on new, initial plans to increase diversity hiring and looks forward to working with the Administration to develop and implement those plans.
 - Equal Pay. The Committee looks forward to working with the Administration through the Senate President to develop a plan to identify inequalities in pay for male v. female and develop a plan to remedy these gaps.
 - Faculty pay: compression and inversion. The Committee thanks the administration for the presentation on this issue at the retreat but notes Senators' comments that much of the information on the topic is already available and suggests that such information be incorporated into the planning on this important issue. Some concern has been expressed informally by Senators that the lower range limit not be too low. The Committee recommends that this issue be given joint attention from the Welfare and the Finance Committee as we seek to work with the Administration to do what is feasible at a time when faculty morale regarding this issue is quite low.
- Jonathan Yarrington recently joined the committee with a focus on environmental issues and welcomes suggestions of priorities for the committee in this area.

8.0 Outside Committee Reports: No reports

9.0 Reports from Other University Advisory Bodies: No reports

10.0 Consent Items

10.1 One-year appointment of Ashley Krebs (School of Professional Nursing Practice)
- No opposition.

11.0 Unfinished Business

11.1 None

12.0 New Business

12.1 IT Acceptable Use Policy
- Emailed to all senators to share, feedback is needed ASAP

13.0 Good of the Order - None

14.0 Announcements

14.1 Next Senate Meeting: November 2, 2:00 p.m., North Academic Building 101 (Gulf Park) with IVN to Scianna Hall 1015 (Hattiesburg)

14.2 Next Senate Executive Meeting: TBA

14.3 Next Senate Administration Meeting: October 9, 11:00 a.m., Lucas Administration Building

14.4 Next Staff Council meeting: November 1, 9:30–11:00 a.m., Trent Lott 207

14.5 HEADWAE Award and IHL Award for Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion applications due on October 15

14.6 Legislative Forum, co-sponsored with the Staff Council and SGA, Friday, November 16, 1:30–3:30 p.m., both Hattiesburg and Gulf Coast locations (TBD)

15.0 Adjourn: Sharon R. moved to adjourn, David H. seconded, and approved unanimously by voice vote.